

Energy Levels and Dissolution: Two Predictors of Metal Oxide Nano-Bio Interactions

Hendrik Naatz

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Abstract

Der steigende Einsatz synthetischer Nanomaterialien erfordert zuverlässige Vorhersagen über Auswirkungen von Nanopartikeln auf die Umwelt. In dieser Arbeit “Energy Levels and Dissolution: Two Predictors of Metal Oxide Nano-Bio Interactions” werden mit (1) den Energieniveaus der Bandstruktur und (2) dem Auflösungsverhalten von Metalloxid-Nanopartikeln in biologischen Umgebungen zwei wesentliche Prädiktoren für deren Toxizität untersucht. Die präzise Quantifizierung sowie die gezielte Anpassung der Partikeleigenschaften durch das Einbringen von Fremdatomen stehen dabei im Fokus der Arbeit.

Überschneiden sich die in Metalloxid-Nanopartikeln verfügbaren Energieniveaus wie Leitungs- und Valenzband mit denen der biologischen Umgebung, können zellschädigende Reaktionen ausgelöst werden. Zur Quantifizierung der Energieniveaus unter umweltnahen Versuchsbedingungen wurde ein dreistufiges Verfahren zur Herstellung von porösen Nanopartikelelektroden entwickelt, welches eine elektrochemische Charakterisierung der Nanopartikel in wässrigen Umgebungen ermöglicht. Im ersten Prozessschritt werden die Nanopartikel mit bereits etablierten Verfahren auf ein elektrisch leitfähiges Elektrodensubstrat transferiert. Um störende Beiträge des Elektrodensubstrates auszuschließen werden die Poren der Nanopartikelschicht im zweiten Prozessschritt mit einem Monomer aufgefüllt, welches anschließend polymerisiert wird. Der dritte Prozessschritt ist eine Plasmabehandlung der Nanopartikel-Polymer Oberfläche, um den für die Messung benötigten Kontakt zwischen Nanopartikeln und Umgebung sicherzustellen. Mit diesem Verfahren wurde das Flachbandpotenzial von fünf Metalloxid-Nanomaterialien präzise bestimmt, welches in direktem Zusammenhang zu deren Energieniveaus steht. In Relation zur biologischen Umgebung kann aus den Messungen die potentielle Toxizität der Nanopartikel vorhergesagt werden.

Lösen sich Nanomaterialien in biologischen Umgebungen auf, spielen die gelösten Stoffe eine größere Rolle als die Energieniveaus der Materialien. Werden schädliche Stoffe freigesetzt, bestimmt die Auflösungskinetik in Relation zu den regulatorischen Mechanismen der Zelle die Auswirkungen auf den Organismus. Durch ihre starke Auflösung in biologischen Umgebungen sind Kupferoxid- und Zinkoxid-Nanopartikel zwei Materialien mit einer hohen Toxizität, sowohl in Zell- als auch in Tierexper-

imenten. In beiden Fällen konnte durch die Einbringung von Eisen (Dotierung) während der Partikelsynthese eine signifikante Reduzierung der Auflösung und damit der Toxizität erzielt werden. Im Rahmen dieser Arbeit wurde die Auflösungskinetik von Kupferoxid-Nanopartikeln in abiotischen Modellmedien mittels Absorptionsspektroskopie untersucht, um Unterschiede zwischen reinen und dotierten Materialien zu identifizieren. Im Gegensatz zur schnellen Freisetzung von reinem Kupferoxid, wurde bei eisendotiertem Kupferoxid ein zweistufiger Auflösungsprozess beobachtet. Die Partikelcharakterisierung vor und nach partieller Auflösung zeigt strukturelle Veränderungen der Partikel auf und ist die Basis für das in dieser Arbeit entwickelte Kinetikmodell. Mit Hilfe des Modells konnten Struktur-Freisetzungs-Beziehungen aufgestellt und die wesentlichen Parameter der Auflösung identifiziert werden.

Durch die modellgestützte Anpassung der Auflösungskinetik von Kupferoxid-Nanopartikeln an die biologische Umgebung konnte die Toxizität in der Nanomedizin gezielt eingesetzt werden um Krebszellen anzugreifen, ohne dabei gesunde Zellen zu beeinträchtigen. In Kombination mit einer Immuntherapie verschwanden Tumore in der durchgeführten *in vivo* Studie vollständig. Auch dort, wo die konventionelle Chemotherapie durch Resistenzbildung versagt, ist der Ansatz mit Nanopartikeln erfolgsversprechend.

Abstract (English)

The increasing use of synthetic nanomaterials requires reliable predictions of the environmental impact of nanoparticles. In this thesis, 'Energy Levels and Dissolution: Two Predictors of Metal Oxide Nano-Bio Interactions', two key predictors of the toxicity of metal oxide nanoparticles are investigated: (1) the energy levels of the electronic band structure and (2) the dissolution behavior. The precise quantification and the specific adaptation of the particle properties through incorporation of foreign atoms are the focus of this thesis.

If the energy levels available in metal oxide nanoparticles, such as the conduction and valence band, overlap with those of the biological environment, cell-damaging reactions can be triggered. For the quantification of the energy levels under environmental experimental conditions, a three-step process for the production of porous nanoparticle electrodes was developed, which enables the electrochemical characterization of nanoparticles in aqueous environments. In the first process step, the nanoparticles are transferred to an electrically conductive electrode substrate using established methods. To prevent any disruptive contribution by the electrode substrate, the pores of the nanoparticle layer are filled with a monomer in the second process step, which is polymerized subsequently. The third process step is a plasma treatment of the nanoparticle-polymer electrode surface to ensure the contact between nanoparticles and the environment, as required for the measurement. With this method the flat band potential of five metal oxide nanomaterials was precisely determined, which is directly related to their energy levels. In relation to the biological environment, the potential hazard of the nanoparticles can be predicted from the measurements.

If nanomaterials dissolve in biological environments, the species which are released play a more important role than the energy levels of the materials. If toxic species are released, the dissolution kinetics in relation to the regulatory mechanisms of the cell determine the fate. Due to their strong dissolution in biological environments, copper oxide and zinc oxide nanoparticles are materials with a high toxicity in cell and animal studies. In both cases, the incorporation of iron (doping) during particle synthesis has led to a significant reduction in dissolution and thus toxicity. In this thesis, the dissolution kinetics of copper oxide nanoparticles in abiotic model

media were investigated by absorption spectroscopy to identify differences between pure and doped materials. In contrast to the rapid release of pure copper oxide, a two-step dissolution process was observed for iron-doped copper oxide. Particle characterization before and after partial dissolution reveals structural changes of the particles and is the basis for the kinetic model developed in this thesis. With the help of the model, structure-release relationships were established and the essential parameters of the dissolution were identified.

Through the model-based modification of the copper oxide dissolution kinetics to the biological environment, the toxicity was used in nanomedicine to specifically attack cancer cells without affecting healthy cells. In combination with immunotherapy, tumors disappeared completely in the *in vivo* study. Even where conventional chemotherapy failed due to the development of drug resistances, the approach with nanoparticles was successful.

A theory is something nobody believes, except the person who made it. An experiment is something everybody believes, except the person who made it.

A. Einstein

Preface

The results shown in this thesis were all obtained during my time as a PhD student at the Faculty of Production Engineering of the University of Bremen. During this time, from January 2015 until April 2020, Prof. Dr.-Ing. habil. Lutz Mädler supervised me. Main results are published as follows:

1. **H. Naatz**, Lin, S., Li, R., Jiang, W., Ji, Z., Chang, C. H., Köser, J., Thöming, J., Xia, T., Nel, A. E., Mädler, L. & Pokhrel, S. Safe-by-Design CuO Nanoparticles *via* Fe-Doping, Cu–O Bond Length Variation, and Biological Assessment in Cells and Zebrafish Embryos. *ACS Nano* **11**, 501–515 (2017)
2. **H. Naatz**, Hoffmann, R., Hartwig, A., Mantia, F. L., Pokhrel, S. & Mädler, L. Determination of the Flat Band Potential of Nanoparticles in Porous Electrodes by Blocking the Substrate–Electrolyte Contact. *The Journal of Physical Chemistry C* **122**, 2796–2805 (2018)
3. Zampardi, G., Thöming, J., **H. Naatz**, Amin, H. M. A., Pokhrel, S., Mädler, L. & Compton, R. G. Electrochemical Behavior of Single CuO Nanoparticles: Implications for the Assessment of their Environmental Fate. *Small* **14**, 1801765 (2018)
4. Hoffmann, R., Baric, V., **H. Naatz**, Schopf, S. O., Mädler, L. & Hartwig, A. Inverse Nanocomposites Based on Indium Tin Oxide for Display Applications: Improved Electrical Conductivity *via* Polymer Addition. *ACS Applied Nano Materials* **2**, 2273–2282 (2019)
5. **H. Naatz**, Manshian, B. B., Rios Luci, C., Tsikourkitoudi, V., Deligianakis, Y., Birkenstock, J., Pokhrel, S., Mädler, L. & Soenen, S. J. Model-Based Nanoengineered Pharmacokinetics of Iron-Doped Copper Oxide for Nanomedical Applications. *Angewandte Chemie International Edition* **59**, 1828–1836 (2020)

6. **H. Naatz**, Manshian, B. B., Rios Luci, C., Tsikourkitoudi, V., Deligianakis, Y., Birkenstock, J., Pokhrel, S., Mädler, L. & Soenen, S. J. Inside Back Cover: Model-Based Nanoengineered Pharmacokinetics of Iron-Doped Copper Oxide for Nanomedical Applications (Angew. Chem. Int. Ed. 5/2020). *Angewandte Chemie International Edition* **59**, 2123–2123 (2020)
7. Joshi, A., **H. Naatz**, Faber, K., Pokhrel, S. & Dringen, R. Iron-Doping of Copper Oxide Nanoparticles Lowers Their Toxic Potential on C6 Glioma Cells. *Neurochemical Research* **45**, 809–824 (2020)

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Acronyms

AAS	Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy
AP	Autophagy
ATPase	Adenosintriphosphatase
AVS	Absolute Vacuum Scale
Arg	Arginine
BEGM	Bronchial Epithelial Cell Growth Medium
BET	Brunauer-Emmett-Teller
BRASS	Bremen Rietveld Analysis And Structure Suite
BSA	Bovine Serum Albumin
CD	Cell Death
CE	Counter Electrode
CPD	Contact Potential Difference
CTR	Copper Transporter
CV	Cyclic Voltammetry
CVD	Chemical Vapor Deposition
DASF	Derivation of Absorption Spectrum Fitting
DBA	Dilute Brown Agouti
DFT	Density Functional Theory
DI	Deionized Water
DL	Deep Level
DMEM	Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
DOS	Density Of States
DPPC	Dipalmitoylphosphatidylcholine
DRS	Diffuse Reflectance Spectroscopy
EDX	Energy Dispersive X-Ray
EIS	Electrochemical Impedance Spectroscopy
ENM(s)	Engineered Nanomaterial(s)
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPR	Electron Paramagnetic Resonance
ET	Exponential Tail
Eq.	Equation

FBS	Fetal Bovine Serum
FSP	Flame Spray Pyrolysis
FTO	Fluorine Doped Tin Oxide
Fig.	Figure
Gs	Gaussian
Glu	Glutamine
HAADF	High Angle Annular Dark Field
HDDA	Hexan-1,6-dioldiacrylat
HER	Hydrogen Evolution Reaction
HM	Holtfreter's Medium
HOMO	Highest Occupied Molecular Orbital
HRTEM	High Resolution Transmission Electron Spectroscopy
HeLa	Henrietta Lacks
His	Histidine
ICP-MS	Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry
ICSD	Inorganic Crystal Structure Database
IDO	Indoleamine 2,3-dioxygenase
IEP	Isoelectric Point
IFA	Institut für Arbeitsschutz
ITO	Indium Doped Tin Oxide
Inc.	Incorporated
Iso	Isoleucine
KP	Kelvin Probe
LDH	Lactate Dehydrogenase
LUMO	Lowest Unoccupied Molecular Orbital
Lys	Lysine
MD	Membrane Damage
MeOx(s)	Metal Oxide(s)
MGO	Malachite Green Oxalate
MO	Methylene Orange
MOL	Method Of Lines
MS	Mott-Schottky
MSC	Mesenchymal Stem Cells
MSE	Mean Square Error
NHE	Normal Hydrogen Electrode
NM(s)	Nanomaterial(s)
NP(s)	Nanoparticle(s)
NPC(s)	Nanoparticle Polymer Composite(s)
NSF	National Science Foundation
ODE	Ordinary Differential Equation

OER	Oxygen Evolution Reaction
PBS	Phosphate Buffered Saline
PDE	Partial Differential Equation
PZZP	Point of Zero Zeta Potential
R	Resistant (Doxorubicin)
R&D	Research And Development
RE	Reference Electrode
RHE	Reversible Hydrogen Electrode
ROS	Reactive Oxygen Species
RPM	Revolutions Per Minute
RPMI	Roswell Park Memorial Institute
RT	Room Temperature
SCL	Space Charge Layer
SD	Standard Deviation
SEM	Scanning Electron Microscopy
SSA	Specific Surface Area
Sec.	Section
Ser	Serine
Skew	Skewness
TEM	Transmission Electron Spectroscopy
TGN	Trans-Golgi Network
Tab.	Table
Thr	Threonine
UHV	Ultra High Vacuum
UPS	Ultraviolet Photoelectron Spectroscopy
UV	Ultraviolet
Val	Valine
Vis	Visible
WE	Working Electrode
XRD	X-Ray Diffraction
a-SC	Amorphous Semiconductor
ac	Alternating Current
ads	Adsorption
a.u.	Arbitrary Units
aq	Aqueous
calc.	Calculated
cit.	Cited
ctrl	Control
cts.	Counts
des	Desorption

epac	Epacadostat
mROS	Mitochondrial ROS
mStress	Mitochondrial Stress
p	Photons
p.	Page
rf	Radio Frequency
s	Solid
sat.	Saturated
sec	Second
sr	Steradian
wt	Weight
<i>i.e.</i>	Id Est
<i>e.g.</i>	Exempli Gratia
<i>et al.</i>	Et Alii/ae
<i>vs.</i>	Versus

List of Greek Symbols

Symbol	Description	Unit
$\Delta\lambda$	Reorganization energy	eV
$\Delta\xi$	Dimensionless spatial grid spacing	—
ΔE	Energy difference as driving force for reaction	eV
ΔE_F	Energy difference between Fermi level and conduction (n-type semiconductor) or valence band (p-type semiconductor)	eV
$\Delta E_{O_2/H_2O}$	Energy difference between E_V and E_{O_2/H_2O}	eV
ΔE_{Ox}	Energy difference between E_V and E_{Ox}	eV
ΔG_f	Gibbs free energy	kJ mol^{-1}
$\Delta G_{i,e}$	Gibbs free energy of educts	kJ mol^{-1}
$\Delta G_{i,p}$	Gibbs free energy of products	kJ mol^{-1}
ΔH_{Hyd}	Hydration energy	eV
Δs	Shell thickness	nm
ΣMSE	Cumulative mean square error	mM^2
Φ	Phase shift	s
α	Charge transfer coefficient	—
∂	Partial differential operator	—
ϵ_λ	Absorption coefficient	$\text{mM}^{-1} \text{ mm}^{-1}$
ϵ_0	Vacuum permittivity	$8.85 \times 10^{-12} \text{ F m}^{-1}$
ϵ_r	Dielectric constant	—
η	Overpotential	V
θ	Angle	°
ϑ_i	Stoichiometric coefficient of species i	—
ϑ_a	Stoichiometric coefficient of species A	—

Symbol	Description	Unit
ϑ_b	Stoichiometric coefficient of species B	—
ϑ_c	Stoichiometric coefficient of species H^+	—
ϑ_d	Stoichiometric coefficient of species H_2O	—
λ	Wavelength	nm
ν	Frequency	Hz
ξ	Landau transformed spatial coordinate	—
π	Pi	—
ρ	Density	$g\ cm^{-3}$
ρ_{CuO}	Density of CuO	$g\ cm^{-3}$
ρ_{TiO_2}	Density of TiO_2	$g\ cm^{-3}$
ρ_{HDDA}	Density of hexan-1,6-diol-diacyrlat $C_{12}H_{18}O_4$	$g\ cm^{-3}$
$\rho(\psi)$	Volumetric charge density	$\#\ cm^{-3}$
σ_{ET}	Dispersion of the exponential tail DOS distribution	eV
σ_{Gs}	Dispersion of the Gaussian DOS distribution	eV
τ_0	Time constant	s
ϕ	Porosity	—
φ	Ac component of band bending	V
χ	Work function	eV
ψ	Band bending ($\psi = U_{App} - U_{FB}$)	V
ψ'	Variable of integration for band bending	V
ψ_S	Band bending at the surface	V
ω	Frequency	Hz

List of Latin Symbols

Symbol	Description	Unit
A	Electron affinity	eV
$A_{//}$	EPR parameter	Gs
A_1	Anodic signal of reaction 1 (CV)	mA cm^{-2}
A_2	Anodic signal of reaction 2 (CV)	mA cm^{-2}
A_3	Anodic signal of reaction 3 (CV)	mA cm^{-2}
$A_{\text{CuFe}_2\text{O}_4}$	Anodic signal of CuFe_2O_4 reaction (CV)	mA cm^{-2}
A_{Fe}	Anodic signal of Fe reaction (CV)	mA cm^{-2}
A_p	Total nanoparticle surface area per unit liter	$\text{nm}^2 \text{ l}^{-1}$
A_λ	Absorbance	—
C	Capacitance	F
C_1	Cathodic signal of reaction 1 (CV)	mA cm^{-2}
C_2	Cathodic signal of reaction 2 (CV)	mA cm^{-2}
$C_{\text{CuFe}_2\text{O}_4}$	Cathodic signal of CuFe_2O_4 reaction (CV)	mA cm^{-2}
C_{FTO}	Capacitance at the FTO substrate surface	F
C_H	Capacitance of the Helmholtz layer	F
C_{SC}	Space charge capacitance	F
D	Diffusion coefficient	$\text{m}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$
D_{Dox1}	Doxorubicin dose 1	$2\mu\text{M kg}^{-1}$
D_{Dox2}	Doxorubicin dose 2	$5\mu\text{M kg}^{-1}$
D_{NP1}	Nanoparticle dose 1	$125 \mu\text{g}/\text{mouse}$
D_{NP2}	Nanoparticle dose 2	$175 \mu\text{g}/\text{mouse}$
D_{NP3}	Nanoparticle dose 3	$225 \mu\text{g}/\text{mouse}$

Symbol	Description	Unit
E_0	Energy conversion factor between absolute vacuum scale (AVS) and electrochemical scale	eV
E_{AVS}	Energy vs. absolute vacuum scale (AVS)	eV
E_{C}	Conduction band (minimum)	eV
E_{D}	Defect state energy level	eV
E_{F}	Fermi level	eV
$E_{\text{F,n}}$	Quasi-Fermi level for electrons (under illumination)	eV
$E_{\text{F,p}}$	Quasi-Fermi level for holes (under illumination)	eV
E_{G}	Band gap	eV
E_{Gs}	Energy level Gaussian distribution	eV
$E_{\text{H}^+/\text{H}_2}$	Redox potential of H^+/H_2 reaction	eV
$E_{\text{O}_2/\text{H}_2\text{O}}$	Redox potential of $\text{O}_2/\text{H}_2\text{O}$ reaction	eV
E_{Ox}	Thermodynamic oxidation potential	V
E_{Red}	Thermodynamic reduction potential	V
E_{Redox}	Electrochemical potential of redox reaction	V
$E_{\text{Redox},i}$	Electrochemical potential of redox reaction of species i	V
E_{S}	Surface state energy level	eV
E_{V}	Valence band (maximum)	eV
F	Faraday constant	C mol^{-1}
$F(\psi, \omega)$	First order coefficient of density of charge ac Taylor expansion	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ V}^{-1}$
$F(R_{\infty})$	Kubelka-Munk function	—
H	Layer thickness	μm
$H(\psi)$	Square of electric field	$\text{V}^2 \text{ cm}^{-2}$
$H_{\text{S}}(\psi)$	Square of electric field at the surface	$\text{V}^2 \text{ cm}^{-2}$
I	Ionization energy	eV
I_{λ}	Integrated peak intensity	nm

Symbol	Description	Unit
$I_{\#}$	Intensity	cts.
I_0	Intensity of incident light	cd
I_{EPR}	Nuclear spin	—
I_{T}	Intensity of transmitted light	cd
$\text{Im}(Z)$	Imaginary part of impedance	Ω
K	Absorption Kubelka-Munk coefficient	—
K_{eq}	Equilibrium constant	—
$K(\psi, \omega)$	Taylor approximation	—
M	Molar mass	g mol^{-1}
M_{CuO}	Molar mass CuO	g mol^{-1}
M_{HDDA}	Molar mass of hexan-1,6-diol-diacrylat $\text{C}_{12}\text{H}_{18}\text{O}_4$	g mol^{-1}
M_{MGO}	Molar mass of malachite green oxalate	g mol^{-1}
M_{MO}	Molar mass of methylene orange	g mol^{-1}
M_{TiO_2}	Molar mass of TiO_2	g mol^{-1}
MSE	Mean square error	mM^2
N	Number of nodes on spatial grid	—
N_{D}	Charge carrier concentration	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3}$
$N_{\text{C},0}$	Total number of states of the constant DOS distribution	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ eV}^{-1}$
$N_{\text{ET},0}$	Total number of states of the exponential tail DOS distribution	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ eV}^{-1}$
$N_{\text{Gs},0}$	Total number of states of the Gaussian DOS distribution	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3}$
N_{V}	Effective density of states	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3}$
$N(E)$	DOS distribution	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ eV}^{-1}$
$N_{\text{C}}(E)$	Constant DOS distribution	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ eV}^{-1}$
$N_{\text{C}}(DL)$	Deep level DOS distribution	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ eV}^{-1}$
$N_{\text{ET}}(E)$	Exponential tail DOS distribution	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ eV}^{-1}$
$N_{\text{Gs}}(E)$	Gaussian DOS distribution	$\# \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ eV}^{-1}$
N_{p}	Number of particles per unit liter	$\# \text{ l}^{-1}$
P	Light intensity	W cm^{-2}
$Q_{\text{MO/MGO}}$	Adsorption capacity	mg g^{-1}
R	Gas constant	$\text{kJ mol}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$
$R_{\text{CT,FTO}}$	Charge transfer resistance at substrate-electrolyte interface	$\Omega \text{ cm}^{-2}$
R_{El}	Electrolyte resistance	Ω

Symbol	Description	Unit
R_{sample}	Sample reflectance	—
R_{standard}	Reference reflectance (BaSO_4)	—
R_{∞}	Reflectance of an infinitely thick sample layer	—
R^2	Coefficient of determination (linear regression)	—
$R(t)$	Particle radius (moving boundary)	nm
R_0	Initial particle radius (moving boundary)	nm
$\text{Re}(Z)$	Real part of impedance	Ω
S	Scattering Kubelka-Munk coefficient	—
S_{A}	Electrode surface area	cm^2
$S_{\text{A,El}}$	Electrode surface area of substrate	cm^2
$S_{\text{A,NP}}$	Electrode surface area of nanoparticles	cm^2
S_{EPR}	Electron spin	—
S_{r}	Surface recombination velocity	cm s^{-1}
SSA	Specific surface area	$\text{m}^2 \text{g}^{-2}$
T	Temperature	$^{\circ}\text{C}$ or K
U	Potential	V
$U_{\text{Ag/AgCl}}$	Potential vs. Ag/AgCl reference electrode	V
$U_{\text{Ag/AgCl}^0}$	Potential difference between Ag/AgCl reference electrode and NHE	V
U_{App}	Applied electrode potential	V
U_{FB}	Flat band potential	V
U_{H}	Potential drop across Helmholtz layer	V
U_{RHE}	Potential vs. RHE	V
V_{p}	Total nanoparticle volume per unit liter	$\text{nm}^3 \text{l}^{-1}$
V_0	Initial nanoparticle volume per unit liter	$\text{nm}^3 \text{l}^{-1}$
$W(\psi, \omega)$	Transformation (a-SC)	V
$W_{\text{S}}(\psi, \omega)$	Surface transformation (a-SC)	V

Symbol	Description	Unit
Z	Impedance	Ω
$Z_{\text{NP-FTO}}$	Impedance at nanoparticle-FTO interface	Ω
Z_{SC}	Impedance of the space charge layer	Ω
a	Stoichiometric coefficient of species a	—
a_{p}	Surface area of one nanoparticle	nm^2
a_{C}	Atomic share of carbon (from EDX spectra)	—
a_{Ti}	Atomic share of titanium (from EDX spectra)	—
a_{W}	Atomic share of tungsten (from EDX spectra)	—
a_i	activity of species i	—
b	Stoichiometric coefficient of species b	—
c_{AA}	Amino acid concentration	mM
$c_{\text{AA},0}$	Initial amino acid concentration	mM
c_{BET}	BET constant	—
c_{CuO}	CuO concentration	mM
$c_{\text{CuO},0}$	Initial CuO concentration	mM
$c_{\text{Cu}^{2+}}$	Cu^{2+} concentration	mM
$c_{\text{Cu}^{2+},0}$	Initial Cu^{2+} concentration	mM
c_{Cu}	Copper concentration	$\# \text{ nm}^{-3}$
$c_{\text{Cu},0}$	Initial copper concentration	$\# \text{ nm}^{-3}$
$c_{\text{Cu},\text{s}}$	Copper surface concentration	$\# \text{ l}^{-1}$
c_{Fe}	Iron concentration	$\# \text{ nm}^{-3}$
$c_{\text{Fe},\text{s}}$	Iron surface concentration	$\# \text{ l}^{-1}$
c_{L}	Glycine concentration	M
c_{Me}	Metal concentration (Me = Ti, W, Zn, Cu)	M
c_{SC}	Specific space charge capacitance	$\text{F } \mu\text{m}^{-1}$
c_{CuCl_2}	Molar CuCl_2 concentration	M
c_i	Molar concentration of species i	M
c_{p}	Volumetric number density	$\# \text{ nm}^{-3}$
d	Differential operator	—
d_{BET}	BET diameter	nm
$d_{\text{p},0}$	Initial particle diameter	nm

Symbol	Description	Unit
$d_{\text{Fe},s=1}$	Particle diameter with surface iron-copper ratio of 1	nm
e^-	Electron	—
f_{Cu}	Copper-iron ratio	—
$f_{\text{Cu},0}$	Initial copper-iron ratio	—
$f_{\text{Cu},s}$	Surface copper-iron ratio	—
f_{Fe}	Iron-copper ratio	—
$f_{\text{Fe},0}$	Initial iron-copper ratio	—
$f_{\text{Fe},s}$	Surface iron-copper ratio	—
f_{rot}	Revolutions per minute	# min ⁻¹
$g//$	EPR parameter	—
h	Plank constant	eV s
h^+	Hole	—
i	Index	—
j	Imaginary unit	—
j_0	Current density	mA cm ⁻²
j_E	Current density	mA cm ⁻²
k_B	Boltzmann constant	8.617×10^{-5} eV K ⁻¹
$k_{\text{ads/des}}$	Rate of adsorption/desorption	a.u.
k_{Cu}	Copper release rate constant	h ⁻¹ mM ^{-2.75}
$k_{\#,s} = k_{\#,v} \Delta s$	Copper concentration per unit surface area	# nm ⁻²
$k_{\#,v} = \frac{\rho_{\text{CuO}} N_A}{M_{\text{CuO}}}$	Volumetric number density of copper atoms	# nm ⁻³
l	Thickness of cuvette	mm
m_λ	Slope of linear regression	nm mM ⁻¹
m^*	Effective mass	g
m_i	Initial mass of particle	g
$m_D(t)$	Dissolved mass of particle	g
$m_P(t)$	Remaining mass of particle	g
m	Partial reaction order (c_{CuO}^m)	—
n	Partial reaction order (c_{AA}^n)	—
n_{cycles}	Number of cycles in CV	—
n_C	Number of carbon atoms	—
n_{Cu}	Volumetric copper concentration	# nm ⁻³
$n_{\text{Cu},0}$	Initial volumetric copper concentration	# nm ⁻³
n_{Fe}	Volumetric iron concentration	# nm ⁻³

Symbol	Description	Unit
$n_{\text{Fe},0}$	Initial volumetric iron concentration	# nm ⁻³
n_T	Exponential factor Kubelka-Munk transformation	—
p	Pressure	N cm ⁻²
p_0	Atmospheric pressure	N cm ⁻²
pH	Negative decadic logarithm of OH ⁻ ion concentration	—
q	Elementary charge	1.602×10^{-19} C
$r(t)$	Nanoparticle radius	nm
r_0	Initial nanoparticle radius	nm
r_{CT}	Nanoparticle-electrolyte resistance per unit length	$\Omega \mu\text{m}^{-1}$
r_{NP}	Internal nanoparticle resistance per unit length	$\Omega \mu\text{m}^{-1}$
r_s	Adsorption ratio MO/MGO	—
$r_{\infty,\text{mod}}$	Final particle radius, model	nm
$r_{\infty,\text{theo}}$	Final particle radius, theoretical	nm
t	Time	s, min, h
v	Volume	nm ³
v_m	Volume monolayer (BET)	nm ³
v_p	Volume of one nanoparticle	nm ³
$v_{p,0}$	Initial volume of one nanoparticle	nm ³
x	Coordinate	nm
y	Coordinate	nm
z	Number of electrons involved in reaction	#
z_{Me}	Number of metal atoms in a phase	#